

## Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 079816 TOSEC 030017

NODIS

FOR WISNER TO DELIVER TO THE SECRETARY, LAGOS FOR AMB YOUNG

FOL RPT CAPE TOWN 607 ACTION SECSTATE 28 MAR 78 QUOTE

S E C R E T CAPE TOWN 607

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, SF, WA, PDEV

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: BOTHA-KISSINGER CONVERSATION

REF: (A) CAPE TOWN 594, (B) STATE 87668, (C) DAR ES SALAAM 1296,

1. CLEMENS KAPUUNO'S ASSASSINATION INCREASES THE ODDS  
AGAINST SAG ACCEPTANCE OF THE WESTERN PROPOSALS ON  
NAMIBIA. IF PIK BOTHA, AS HIS AIDES CONTINUE TO IMPLY,  
HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING, ALBEIT CAUTIOUSLY, TO PROMOTE  
CABINET ACCEPTANCE OF THE PLAN, THE ASSASSINATION WILL  
MAKE IT CONSIDERABLY MORE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO DO SO.  
AT THE SAME TIME, COMING ON THE HEELS OF THE COUNCIL

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OF NAMIBIA DECLARATION, SAM NUJOMA'S TV INTERVIEW REMARKS ON  
MAJORITY RULE, AND THE SECRET SWAPO DOCUMENTS OVER WHICH THE  
SAG HAS MADE SUCH A FUSS, THE TRAGIC ASSASSINATION OF KAPUUNO  
WILL PROVIDE FURTHER RATIONALIZATION OF ANY SAG DECISION TO  
MOVE AHEAD UNILATERALLY. THE SOUTH AFRICANS MAY CALCULATE  
THAT THE KILLING OF KAPUUNO WILL BE A PARTICULARLY TELLING  
JUSTIFICATION WITH WESTERN AUDIENCES. THE CABINET WILL REPORTEDLY

DISCUSS KAPUUNO'S ASSASSINATION IN ITS MEETING TOMORROW (MARCH 29)  
AFTER BOTHA RETURNS FROM WINDHOEK (CAPE TOWN 603).

2. GIVEN THE NEW FACTOR OF KAPUUNO'S DEATH, I BELIEVE WE  
SHOULD MOVE AHEAD WITH THE CARTER-CALLAGHAN (OR FIVE POWER  
CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT) LETTER TO VORSTER SUGGESTED IN REFTEL (A).  
THE LETTER COULD BEGIN BY EXPRESSING SHOCK AND DISMAY AT THE  
ASSASSINATION OF KAPUUNO, BUT STRESS THAT WHOEVER THE PERPETRATORS  
OF THIS TRAGEDY, HIS DEATH FURTHER UNDERSCORES THE NEED TO  
FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE FUTURE OF NAMIBIA. IN  
THIS REGARD, THE MESSAGE COULD STRESS THAT THE WESTERN PROPOSAL  
IS SHAPED TO PROVIDE A PEACEFUL ENVIRONMENT FOR AN IMPARTIAL  
ELECTION FREE OF INTIMIDATION AND VIOLENCE BY ANY PARTY. THE  
MESSAGE COULD ALSO STATE THAT THE WESTERN LEADERS ARE CONFIDENT  
THAT THE PROPOSAL WILL ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE AND THAT THE  
WESTERN COUNTRIES WOULD VIEW WITH CONCERN EFFORTS BY ANY FORCE  
TO DISRUPT A PEACEFUL POLITICAL PROCESS IN NAMIBIA.

3. SINCE DRAFTING THE ABOVE, WE HAVE HAD TIME TO READ  
AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S CABLE SUGGESTING A WESTERN FIVE  
FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN CAPE TOWN (DAR ES SALAAM 1296).  
THE ADVANTAGES AS WE SEE THEM ARE:

--SUCH A MEETING COULD RECOUP THE SENSE OF MOMENTUM IN SOUTH  
AFRICA TOWARD AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT WHICH EMERGED FOLLOWING  
THE NEW YORK TALKS BUT WHICH HAS FADED RECENTLY AND WHICH COULD  
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BE LOST ENTIRELY BY THE ASSASSINATION OF KAPUUNO.

--THE DRAMATIC GESTURE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS COMING TO SOUTH  
AFRICA WOULD NOT NECESSARILY DISSUADE THE SAG FROM PURSUING  
THE INTERNAL COURSE BUT IT COULD GIVE PAUSE TO THE LEADERSHIP.  
IT WOULD AT LEAST UNDERCUT THE PLAUSIBILITY OF SOUTH AFRICA  
GOING IT ALONE.

--IF BOTHA IS INDEED WORKING ON BEHALF OF A SETTLEMENT, THE  
MEETING WOULD STRENGTHEN HIS HAND, PARTICULARLY IF THE FIVE  
FOREIGN MINISTERS COULD INVOLVE OTHER CABINET MINISTERS IN  
DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUE AS AMBASSADOR YOUNG SUGGESTS.

--IT COULD ALSO PROVIDE THE MINISTERS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR FACE-  
TO-FACE DISCUSSION WITH VORSTER, WHO IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS  
IS THE DECISION MAKER.

--FINALLY, IT WOULD DRAMATIZE THE WESTERN COMMITMENT TO FINDING  
A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN NAMIBIA.

4. FOREMOST AMONG THE DISADVANTAGES ARE:

--THE PROBLEMS OF GETTING ALL FIVE WESTERN FOREIGN MINISTERS

TO UNDERTAKE SUCH A MISSION.

--THE POSSIBILITY THAT SUCH A MEETING WOULD BE MISINTERPRETED  
BY SWAPO AND THE FRONT LINE UNLESS COUNTERVAILED IN SOME FASHION.  
(THE NEGATIVE IMPACT COULD BE OFFSET IF THE FIVE FOREIGN  
MINISTERS ON THEIR RETURN STOPPED OFF IN LUSAKA TO TALK TO  
SAM NUJOMA.)

--THE POSSIBILITY THAT VORSTER MIGHT RESPOND TO THE FOREIGN  
MINISTERS WITH AN OUTRIGHT REJECTION, THUS UNDERSCORING THE  
DEFEAT FOR THE WESTERN INITIATIVE.

--VORSTER MIGHT TRY TO USE THE VISIT TO TRY TO BARGAIN WITH THE  
FOREIGN MINISTERS ON BILATERAL RELATIONS, MOST PARTICULARLY  
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REGARDING WESTERN ATTITUDE TOWARD SOUTH AFRICA'S DOMESTIC POLICIES.

5. FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT THE DESIRE TO HEAD OFF MOVES  
BY THE SAG IN THE DIRECTION OF AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT  
WHICH WOULD BE HARD TO UNDO TENDS TO OUTWEIGH WHAT I AM  
SURE ARE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS OF TRYING TO GET FIVE FOREIGN  
MINISTERS TO COME TO CAPE TOWN ON A MISSION WITH UNCERTAIN  
PROSPECTS. THE DRAMA OF SUCH A VISIT IS MORE LIKELY TO DETER  
SOUTH AFRICA'S PLUNGING AHEAD INTO AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT  
THAN A SET OF LETTERS, ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT OF COURSE GUARANTEE  
TURNING VORSTER AWAY FROM THIS COURSE INDIFINITELY, UNLESS  
SWAPO CAN BE BROUGHT TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL SO THAT THE FULL  
WEIGHT OF DISREGARDING THE WESTERN EFFORT FALLS SQUARELY  
ON SOUTH AFRICA.

6. IF IT SEEMS ADVISABLE TO ATTEMPT THE FOREIGN MINISTERS'  
MEETING IN CAPE TOWN, A PROPOSAL TO THAT EFFECT COULD EASILY  
BE COMBINED WITH THE PROPOSED LETTER.

7. PLEASE PASS THIS MESSAGE TO ANDY YOUNG AND DON MCHENRY.

UNQUOTE COOPER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Draft Date:** 28 mar 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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